

DR. R. MALLU : Sir, there is an entrance examination for taking children into Navodaya Vidyalayas. After selecting students through the entrance examination, some of the students are not taken into Navodaya Vidyalaya saying they had not produced three years' continuous rural certificate from a particular school.

There are children who have not gone to the Government schools in the third class. If such children are there, what are the discretionary powers given to the Deputy Director or to the Principal or to any other officer? There are students who are denied entry into Navodaya Vidyalayas even after qualifying the examination.

I want to know from the Hon Minister whether they are thinking of giving some concession by way of some exemption to such students on looking into the case thoroughly.

Secondly, there are a number of Kendriya Vidyalaya schools, which have been sanctioned. But the minimum transportation facilities are not given to Navodaya schools in Andhra Pradesh. I just want to know from the Hon. Minister whether they are going to provide minimum transportation facilities to the Principal and other staff members in Navodaya schools.

KUMARI SELJA : As regards the first part of the Hon. Member's question, Sir, at least three years' certificate from the rural area is necessary for Classes III, IV and V. It is compulsory for 75 per cent of the students who come from the rural background, from the rural area...*(Interruptions)*

SHRIMATI MALINI BHATTACHARYA : We cannot hear you. Kindly use your mike. ...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : They are asking you to raise your voice.

KUMARI SELJA : Sir, about 25 per cent of the children are from the open quota and they need not have this kind of three years' certificate from the rural area. Seventy-five per cent has to be from the rural area...*(Interruptions)*

MR. SPEAKER : What about transportation facilities?

KUMARI SELJA : Sir, about transportation facilities, these are mainly residential schools. We try to see that we give quarters to staff members.

[Translation]

SHRIMATI SAROJ DUBEY : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the concept of setting up Navodaya Vidyalayas was envisaged with a view of overall development of rural children and for providing better educational facilities to them, so that they could play a vital role in national integrity. But most of the Navodaya Vidyalayas in rural areas are situated at secluded places and it seems as these were punishment cells. Building of Navodaya Vidyalayas do not have boundary walls and there is no one to look after the children who have come here from

outside for studies. As a result of it students are dropping out of these schools and their number is decreasing. I would like to know from the Hon. Minister as to what is the criteria for identifying places for Navodaya Vidyalayas so that these could be maintained and educational system could be supervised properly.

KUMARI SELJA : In the context of boundary walls, I would like to say that we have sanctioned 250 boundary walls.

SHRIMATI SAROJ DUBEY : It has not been sanctioned for Allahabad.

KUMARI SELJA : We will do that at the earliest

SHRIMATI SAROJ DUBEY : Navodaya Vidyalaya at Allahabad has been closed for four months

KUMARI SELJA : The situation regarding Allahabad would be told after getting the information I agree with the Hon. Member on this issue and we will try our best to cover all the place at the earliest

[English]

Keeping in view the security of the students and of the school, we will try to organise this as soon as possible...*(Interruptions)*

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : Only two questions have been raised during the last 40 minutes

[English]

Foodgrains

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*384 DR. K.V.R CHOWDARY

SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA

Will the Minister of FOOD be pleased to state

(a) the procurement of foodgrains by the Food Corporation of India during 1993-94 and 1994-95, item-wise season-wise,

(b) whether this procurement will meet the demand of Public Distribution System;

(c) the amount spent on these procurements during the above period;

(d) the stock of foodgrains both buffer and operational at the end of March, 1995, foodgrain-wise,

(e) whether the foodgrains reserve position is likely to be improved during 1995-96;

(f) the steps taken by the FCI to meet the shortage of storage capacity and the disposal of existing stock, and

(g) the details of the quality control laboratories maintained by FCI through out the country?

THE MINISTER OF FOOD (SHRI AJIT SINGH) : (a) to (g). A Statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT

(a) Quantities of foodgrains procured by the Food Corporation of India for Central Pool during 1993-94 and 1994-95 marketing seasons are as under :

(In million tonnes)

Procurement (Marketing) Year/Season	1993-94	1994-95
Kharif (1st Oct.-30th Sept.) (Rice)	13.6	11.7
Rabi (1st April-31st March) (Wheat)	12.8	11.8
		(As on 17.4.1995)
Coarsegraine :		
Kharif (1st Oct.-30th Sept.)	0.25	Less than 500 tonnes.
Rabi (1st April-31st March)	0.01	

(b) Yes, Sir

(c) A sum of Rs.13,288 crores was spent in 1993-94 on the procurement by the Food Corporation of India. The revised estimates for 1994-95 is Rs 14,023 crores.

(d) The stock of foodgrains in Central Pool stands at about 26.8 million Metric Tonnes as on 31.03.1995.

(e) Yes, most likely Sir.

(f) Out of 27.3 million tonnes storage capacity with the Food Corporation of India, 15.6 million tonnes capacity exists in Northern wheat growing States and out of which 2 million tonnes space was vacant as on 01.02.1995. Further, about 1.5 million tonnes of Cover and Plinth (CAP) storage space would become available by custom milling of paddy stocks before monsoon/during Rabi Season for storing the wheat purchased. Another 3 to 4 million tonnes of vacant storage space would be available by despatching foodgrains to other consuming States during procurement period April, 1995 to June, 1995.

The field officers of Food Corporation of India have been authorised to hire additional storage capacity of about 5 million tonnes in Northern States to meet emergent situations. In addition, the Food Corporation of India has arranged cover and plinth storage capacity of about one million tonnes.

As regards disposal of stock, efforts are made to create more storage space by open sale of paddy, wheat and rice.

(g) A network of 182 Quality Control Laboratories are maintained by Food Corporation of India throughout the country including the Central Laboratory at the Food Corporation of India Headquarters at New Delhi.

DR. K.V.R. CHOWDARY : Mr. Speaker, Sir, foodgrains production is increasing more than the demand. Will the Hon. Minister allocate more funds for procurement or purchase from the farming community as they fear that there will be a glut? Sometimes nobody comes forward to purchase it as they always tell that the targets have already been reached by the FCI. I would like to know from the Hon. Minister, through you, sir, if the targets are increased or not.

SHRI AJIT SINGH : The idea behind procurement is that we provide a minimum support price and we are bound to buy whatever foodgrain is offered at that price. So, there is no question of increasing the target or anything. We will buy at the minimum support price whatever foodgrain is offered. ... (Interruptions)

DR. K.V.R. CHOWDARY : My second Supplementary is: What steps the FCI has taken to avoid shortage of storage space which is more in the Southern States as already given out by the Minister and to encourage construction of storage space on priority to private bodies or whether the Government through the PCI will construct more godowns etc? Will the Hon. Minister reply to this?

SHRI AJIT SINGH : This year, our buffer stock is almost, in fact, more than twice of what we need, and we also expect about 13 million tonnes procurement for the rabi season. We are taking all steps to increase the storage for FCI, Central Warehousing Corporation, State warehousing Corporation and wherever else it is available.

DR. K.V.R. CHOWDARY : What about the position in Southern States?

SHRI AJIT SINGH : The procurement and the shortage thereby is mostly in the Northern States. In Andhra Pradesh also, we are planning to increase the storage space by more than six lakh tonnes this year.

SHRI SOBHANADREESWARA RAO VADDE : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Food Corporation of India is procuring huge quantities of rice and paddy in Punjab and Haryana in the Northern region. While Andhra Pradesh is one of the largest paddy producing States where considerable quantities are given to FCI, the FCI is not purchasing paddy directly from the farmers. Even with great efforts and lot of representations, they started at the eleventh hour and they do not supply necessary gunnies. Many a time the Quality Control Centre which are mentioned in your reply, help the middlemen, the traders. When the paddy was taken by the farmer, they had imposed two or three cuts. But when the same paddy comes through a middleman or a broker, they do not allow any cut. Like that it has been happening for a long time. Will the Hon. Minister get this matter examined, and take necessary steps so that paddy is procured from the farmers in Andhra Pradesh directly without any middlemen?

SHRI AJIT SINGH : Sir, the paddy is procured in different States through *mandis* and directly, the State agencies also procure it and we continuously monitor it. If the Hon. Member has any problem at one particular centre or State, we are available and we will do whatever we can.

[Translation]

SHRI DAU DAYAL JOSHI : Hon Mr Speaker, fortunately there had been a bumper crop of wheat this year. In spite of several efforts the Government is not purchasing wheat in Rajasthan. FCI officials have not turned up for purchasing wheat even after I have drawn the attention of District Magistrate Five days ago I have telephoned from here and only three 'tolies' of wheat were purchased after it, the rest of wheat is being sold at the rate of Rs 320 to 325 and farmer is being exploited. FCI and Governmental agencies are meek spectator to it. Hon. Mr Jakhar the rate of wheat has come down to 300 which was 320 five days earlier. Balramji you are a well wisher of farmers and Hon. Ajit Singh is following his father's footsteps and has been advocating the cause of farmers. What steps are you going to take for those farmers of Rajasthan. Whether the Minister of Food and Jakharji will make arrangements for proper procurement of foodgrain to provide relief to the exploited farmers Please issue clear instructions and satisfy my query.

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, this problem is not confined to Rajasthan alone but relates to the whole country...(Interruptions)

SHRI AJIT SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, one complaint centre is functioning here for 24 hours

SHRI DAU DAYAL JOSHI : I am saying that you can ask about it. What is this complaint centre. Whether the wheat will be sold for Rs. 300.

SHRI AJIT SINGH : Before coming to this House I have asked whether any such complaint has been received...(Interruptions)

SHRI DAU DAYAL JOSHI : I, myself have lodged the complaint.

SHRI AJIT SINGH : Please, listen to me

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : Mr. Joshi, this is very wrong on your part. I mean both the Joshis

[Translation]

SHRI AJIT SINGH : I am glad to know that Hon. Member is concerned over the cause of farmers. You would have informed me if the complaint was not received by the complaint centre. I would have inquired the matter. I am always ready to conduct an inquiry into it. I am ready to take any step and go there to check it. I am ready to take Hon. Member with me for checking it.

SHRI DAU DAYAL JOSHI : I am ready to go today itself...(Interruptions)

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : I do not expect the Minister to reply to this.

[Translation]

MR. SPEAKER : Do you not understand what has been said by him. He is ready to take you with him.

(Interruptions)

MR. SPEAKER : Even then you are continuing your speech

[English]

Please sit down You do not understand anything

[Translation]

SHRI DAU DAYAL JOSHI : I am ready to go today

[English]

MR. SPEAKER : No please I do not expect the Minister to reply to these interruptions. Otherwise it will be unending. The Minister may call him and talk to him.

SHRIMATI SUSEELA GOPALAN : Considering the frequent disruption of traffic in the border of Tripura and Assam, will the Government consider creating enough storage capacity in Tripura to prevent disruption of the distribution of rations? It is frequently happening and the storage capacity in Tripura is not at all enough. So will the Government step it up?

SHRI AJIT SINGH : Recently, we have discussed this problem of the North-East in general because of the disruption of traffic and we are taking appropriate steps to make sure that enough foodgrains are available there.

[Translation]

SHRI RAM NAGINA MISHRA : Mr Speaker, Sir, it is a fact that farmer produces foodgrain by toiling hard. Government have fixed the minimum procurement price for his produce which means, that it will be purchased by the Government if market prices go lower than this minimum price level. I am saying this about Deoria and Padrauna districts of eastern Uttar Pradesh. Hon. Minister was saying Rs. 320 whereas in my area grocers are buying wheat for Rs. 250 to 300 only. There is no Governmental agency which can buy wheat on the fixed Governmental rates. I would like to tell the Minister that people are not so enlightened that they may register their complaint. Do you not have any information about the number of Governmental shops in every districts for purchasing foodgrains and the quantity of foodgrain purchased by them. Eastern districts are in deplorable condition. Your Department should inquire about the number of shops opened for procurement of foodgrains in Gorakhpur, Padrauna and Deoria. If no such shop has been opened, these should be opened immediately. Farmers are being cheated there.

SHRI AJIT SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, setting up of shops is a different issue of the moment we are talking about procurement. Several Governmental and State Governmental agencies are there to procure foodgrain. State Government also procure foodgrain through FCI.

As I have already told you that it is our collective duty to create awareness among farmers. If you will point out its shortcomings. I will try to remove them.

SHRI RAM NIHOR RAI : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the messiah of farmers. Chaudhari Charan Singh was of the opinion that farmers should get rid from the clutches of middlemen. The Hon. Minister is the son of such a great father. The hon. Minister has just stated that many godowns are being established. I would like to know whether small godowns will be set up in blocks so that farmers are saved from the clutches of middlemen, so that the dream of Chaudhari Charan Singh may be fulfilled.

SHRI AJIT SINGH : There are the Central and State Warehousing Corporations besides the F.C.I. They are setting up godowns at various places. We also propose to introduce a Bill in this regard. In which there should be a provision where the farmers can store their foodgrains. It is also being considered that it should be brought under the Negotiable Instrument. The issue raised by the Hon. Member is being considered by the Government.

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the Hon. Minister has stated that complaint centres are being set up. If the complaint regarding purchase will be lodged at Delhi, What will be its outcome? I would like to ask another thing. The other agencies of States are buying wheat or other foodgrains. Moreover, they purchase wheat or other foodgrains from FCI godowns also. The trucks or foodgrains in the FCI godowns are intercepted and allowed to unload their goods only after greasing their palm. The same process starts in fair price shops while getting wheat or sugar. Neither wheat nor sugar is made available without greasing palms. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he proposes to conduct comprehensive enquiry thereof. This issue has been raised umpteen times in the august House. Mr. Speaker, Sir, you may recall that it was raised in this august House that FCI godowns are attacked by rodents. These rodents have two legs and two hands. I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to how many cats will be engaged to do away with these rodents and whether it will be investigated.

SHRI AJIT SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, for this purpose there is vigilance department. Sometimes we also conduct raids. If hon. Member wants I can give him details. If hon. Members will bring any case of corruptions into my notice, and enquiry will be certainly conducted there in.

SHRI RAJVEER SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, such cases are happening in every district. Hon. Minister,

such cases are happening everywhere. Before holding the post of hon. Minister, he himself used to say so what I am saying now.

SHRI AJIT SINGH : Now I am trying to eradicate corruption. You please, help me in this regard.

SHRI VIJOY KUMAR YADAV : Mr. Speaker, Sir, quality control was mentioned here. The foodgrains are kept in stock distributed to through Public Distribution System to fair price shops. So many complaints are received in this regard. I would like to know from the hon. Minister as to how many laboratories are in Bihar and whether the foodgrains testing capacity is sufficient and if not the action being taken in this regard.

SHRI AJIT SINGH : Mr. speaker, Sir, there are 182 laboratories. But I do not know the number of such laboratories in Bihar. So far as storage is concerned, procurement is very low in Bihar. But we have sufficient storage capacity to the extent of the procurement.

SHRI UMRAO SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, the procurement of superfine paddy had been reduced on technical ground. It caused huge loss to the farmers of Punjab. The Government of Punjab and all hon. Members from Punjab have brought this fact into the notice of the hon. Minister that the reasons behind the downfall in procurement was technical and it should be made up. I would like to know from the hon. Minister whether he proposes to make any arrangement to make good loss caused to farmers.

SHRI AJIT SINGH : Mr. Speaker, Sir, this question is related to procurement and storage. We are acquainted with the problem raised by the hon. Member. This issue is being discussed with the Government of Punjab and other Ministries also. We will try to provide facilities for the farmers to the best of our capacity.

[English]

Price of Edible Oils

*387 **SHRI RAM NAIK :**

SHRI SULTAN SALAHUDDIN OWAISI :

Will the Minister of CIVIL SUPPLIES, CONSUMER AFFAIRS AND PUBLIC DISTRIBUTION be pleased to state :

(a) whether the Government have been able to check prices of edible oils by bringing them under Open General Licence;

(b) if so, whether this decision has helped in not only checking the rise of prices but has also stabilised prices without any imports;

(c) if so, whether the import will be costlier after assessing the cost of refining and handling;

(d) if so, whether the prices had touched an all time peak of 40,000 per tonne in February last; and